giving valuable suggestions and they belong to different political parties. The Standing Committee also comprises. Chief Ministers who belong to different political parties. They are giving their opinions. Let us all consult their opinion and after consultation, if need be, let all the political parties discuss what they want to do with Article 356.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the 47 years since we adopted our Constitution, Article 356 has emerged as one of the most important and most controversial porvisions. On the one hand it is there in order to safeguard national unity and integrity, on the other there is a widespread feeling that it has been very grossly misused from time to time for partisan purposes. Therefore, while the hon. Minister has been stressing on the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council I think what the Members of Parliament are feeling is that, in addition to this—the Inter-State Council is an independent body not linked with Parliament—will there be any move to consult the Members of Parliament? All parties are represented on the Committee on Home Affairs. So, is there any move to consult this Committee specifically before finalising their views on this issue? That is an important point I would like to suggest. Secondly, how long will this whole exercise take? This is an important matter but that does not mean that it should be allowed to drag on forever. Then again, the situation can be misused and so on. So, there is a lot of feeling in the country about Article 356. My suggestion is that we should come to a quick decision on this issue with maximum consultations.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: Sir, the suggestion made by Dr. Karan Singh is very, very good. We shall difinitely consult all the political parties. The deliberations of the Standing Committee are perhaps in the last stages and very soon we will get their opinion. Thereafter, I assure you that all steps which are suggested by the hon. Members will definitely be taken.

*527 *The questioner (Dr. B.B. Dutta) was absent, for answer vide col. 32 infra*]

Upgradation of Guwahati Medical College, Assam

*528. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:
SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to upgrade Guwahati Medical College, Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any special grant has been provided/is being given for this pupose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: (a) to (d) A request was received from the Government of Assam for Central assistance for upgradation of the Guwahati Medical College, Assam. An expert team has inter alia assessed that in the short term incomplete buildings meant for the Residents and a nurses hotel need completion; water supply and sewage facilities have to be augmented; equipment has to be repaired and an emergency department established. Rs.2.00 crores has been approved for release as additional Central assistance to the Government of Assam for establishment of Emergency Care Services in the Medical College. The State has also been asked to make a provision for the upgradation of the Medical College, Guwahati in the State Annual Plan and to send the detailed proposal for upgradation.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Govindram Miri.

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have put a pointed question. But the reply is very cryptic. It is unfortunate of the Central Government that Guwahati is the only place among the seven sisters, the North-East, where we have one medical college. This is the position as far as my knowledge goes. This lone medical college is being neglected by the Government. As per the reply given by the Government, it is clear that the buildings meant for the Residents are incomplete; the hostel for nurses is incomplete; water supply and sewage facilities have to be augmented; equipment has to be repaired; and an emergency department has to be established. When such basic infrastructure is not available, I don't know how the medical college could function. I want to know the Government would be able to complete the incomplete buildings and other things. I would also like to know the number of beds to be provided in this hospital. When are you going to complete all the incomplete things?

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: Sir, the answer very clearly states that initially Rs. 2 crores have been approved as additional Central assistance to the Government of Assam for establishment of emergency-care services. The Government of Assam has also been asked to make a provision in their Annual Plan for upgradation of the Medical College and to send us the detailed proposals for such upgradation. As soon as it makes a provision in its Annual Plan and submitts to us the detailed proposals for upgradation, we will decide to take the necessary steps. Of course, it would not be in one go. It has to be done by stages in accordance with the provisions that we make. Both of us, the Central and the State Governments, hand-in-hand go-ahead and complete all the works.

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Sir, Rs. 2.00 crores is too meagre to complete all these works. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether students are being admitted or whether students are passing out without any clinical knowledge. How many specialised departments are functioning at present? When are you proposing to start the other specialised departments?

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: Sir, I would request the hon. Member to come to me. Let us sit together and solve whatever problems are there across the table. Let us discuss all the problems. I will call the engineers and other people who are involved in this. Let us discuss and solve all the problems.

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: I want upgradation of the Medical College in Guwahati. It is the only medical college in the North-East.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Sir, in the whole of North-East there are only three medical colleges. One is Guwahati Medical College. The second one at Dibrugarh is much older. And the third one is at Silchar. And these three, particularly the Assam Medical College, caters to the needs of the seven North-Eastern States. Now, an experts committee had been there but it was only for a short-term. Will the Government look into the possibility of appointing another experts committee not only for upgradation of the Guwahati Medical College but also for providing essential facilities in other medical colleges because, otherwise, the students from all over the North-East have to come all the way to New Delhi or go to Vellore? So, looking into all this, will the Minister take some steps for mitigating the suffering of the deprived people of the North-East?

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: The Government considers development of North-Eastern Region as one of the most important factors in the integration of the country and development of the country as a whole. You may be aware that our former Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowdaji, went there. He inspected

the various facilities in different States in the North Eastern Region. He was there for about a week and a number of schemes had been declared for development of that region. Health care services and education is one of those items that are included in those schemes for the North-Eastern States. We know that there was an experts committee in the past, a task force was appointed in 1988 and we have the recommendations before us, and as I said earlier, what is required is that the State Governments and the Members of Parliament coming from that area as well as the Government of India have to sit together and formulate schemes for development of that area. I assure, you, Sir, if you can find some time to sit with us and the concerned Department officials, we will be able to find answers to the problems that are afflicting this area.

SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Sir, so far as admissions into medical colleges are concerned, students coming from only urban areas are getting admissions whereas those coming from rural areas are not getting this opportunity. Will the Government frame some rules for reservation of seats in medical colleges for those who are coming from rural areas? So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, there is reservation of seats in engineering colleges for students coming from rural areas. I would like to know whether the Government of India could make some such rules and instruct all the State Governments to reserve some seats in medical colleges for students coming from rural areas.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: Hon. Shri Margabandu, may I tell you that these three medical colleges in the North-Eastern Region cater to, in fact, rural areas basically because all the students-intake is from that particular area. So, this question particularly doesn't become so very relevant. Perhaps you want to ask about the colleges in the entire country. Let us deal with that separately. So far as the North-Eastern States are concerned, 391 seats are available they are meant for students coming from that region and in that region I think there are hardly any urban areas except the major towns.

SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Sir, my question is whether some reservation of seats can be there for students coming from rural areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is different question.

Delay in commencing new parking bay at Dabolim Airport, Goa

*529. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the delay in commencing new parkinbg bay at Dabolim Airport, Goa;

(b) why the approach path to the new parking bay and runway has not been constructed;

(c) whether the lighting works along the runway is not permitted to be shifted/ installed by AAI at civilian enclaves;

(d) if so, the resons therefor;

(e) what are the estimates of works for shifting these lights fittings to defence and civilian enclaves; and

(f) steps being taken by AAI in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) There is no delay in construction of new parking bay at Dabolim airport, Goa.

(b) the work on link taxi way was delayed due to shifting of the runway lights.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) The estimated cost of shifting of runway lights is Rs. 5.5. lakhs.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Sir, the main problem with this airport in